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ABSTRACT

This curriculum project was designed primarily to be incorporated into a larger world history unit on the Holocaust and World War II. The project can be adapted for a lesson on 'situational ethics' for use in a philosophy class. The lesson requires students to examine a historical case and to write and discuss that particular case. The project's lesson aims to get students to examine critically such issues as "Man's inhumanity to man"; and "How could this happen?" These issues would be framed against the backdrop of the organized resistance to Nazi occupation that took place in the Warsaw Ghetto in the spring of 1943. The project is organized along the traditional lines of a lesson plan, and includes summary notes, questions to be answered both in writing and group discussion, as well as references to several general works on the Holocaust. (Contains 15 references of books and videos.) (BT)

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ED 439 036

Curriculum Project for the Hungary-Poland Summer Seminars Program

THE HOLOCAUST IN HUNGARY AND POLAND
Case Studies of Response to Genocide

Summer, 1998
William L. Hartley
September 7, 1998

SO 030 774

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My project is designed primarily to be incorporated as a lesson into a larger unit that I teach in World History classes on the Holocaust and World War Two. As part of that project, I have the local president of the B'nai B'rith come talk to my students, along with several Holocaust survivors. The primary objective of my curriculum project was to incorporate my experience in Hungary and Poland into this lesson. However, I wanted to focus my summer experience on bringing back something I could use when teaching not only my own history classes, but also be useful for any school wide or community program dealing with World War Two, the Holocaust or racial and religious tolerance.

Since I knew several months ago that I would be teaching an elective course on Philosophy, I also wanted my project to be adaptable to a lesson on "situational ethics", one that would require my students to take an historical case and write and discuss on that particular situation; a "what would you do?" approach to getting students to critically examine such issues as "Man's inhumanity to Man" and "How Could This Happen?" I wanted to frame such questions against the backdrop of the organized resistance to Nazi occupation that took place in the Warsaw Ghetto in the spring of 1943. I also wanted to illustrate individuals who took courageous and dangerous stands against Nazi barbarism in both Poland and Hungary.

What follows is an outline lesson plan I intend to use in my American History and Philosophy classes, as well as the larger school assembly on the Holocaust that includes concentration camp survivors and for any presentation I may be called upon to make to community leaders or civic groups. It is organized along the traditional lines of a lesson plan, and includes summary notes, questions to be answered both in writing and group discussion, as well as references to several general works on the Holocaust.

Lesson Objectives:

1. To define and understand the concept of genocide and to recognize the dangers of prejudice which can result in genocide.

2. To analyze conditions in the ghettos that could lead to organized resistance such as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in Poland.

3. To study the actions of individuals within the Warsaw Ghetto in order to understand there are various types of resistance to brutality.

4. To study the actions of Maximilian Kolbe as an example of individual resistance to the Holocaust in Poland.

5. To study the actions of Raoul Wallenberg as an example of individual resistance to the Holocaust in Hungary.

6. To reflect upon how individuals respond to situations in which they are called upon to make "life or death" choices.

7. To contemplate upon how the individual student would respond under similar circumstances, given the particulars discussed in class.

8. To realize the consequences of one's moral choices and to understand that individuals can make a difference.

GENOCIDE

Teaching Strategies:

1. **Prepare a lecture on the nature and components of genocide.**
2. **Present vocabulary terms for students to define, then discuss definitions.**
3. **Have students read "Ecidujerp, Prejudice" in preparation for class discussion.**

Materials:

1. **Teacher notes on genocide**
2. **Vocabulary terms related to genocide and prejudice**
3. **Secondary source reading on prejudice**

Vocabulary

Bigotry: Intolerance for the belief of others, particularly those of minority groups

Bystander: One who is present at some event without participating in it

Discrimination: An act of exclusion prompted by prejudice

Genocide: The destruction of a religious, racial or national group, usually executed under the guise of a "political necessity"

Minority: A group that differs, as in race, religion or ethnic background, from the larger group of which it is a part

Perpetrator: For this lesson, perpetrator is used to mean one who deliberately carries out a harmful act against an individual or a group

Persecution: The oppression and/or harassment of people based on their race, religion, color, national origin or other distinguishing characteristics

Pogroms: Attacks on Jews by mobs of non-Jews; these attacks led to injury, murder, rape, looting and destruction of Jewish property

Prejudice: A judgment or opinion formed before the facts are known; a preconceived idea usually unfavorable to describe unfounded intolerance or hatred of other races, creeds, religions an other traits

Protector/Rescuer: Someone who shields or cares for another person or group, often at great personal sacrifice

Scapegoating: placing undeserved blame on a person or group

Stereotype: A generalized image of a person or group which is often prejudicial to that person or group

Notes for Lecture

Discussion of Genocide

It is estimated that well over 50 million people have perished in genocidal acts since 1900, and this has led some scholars to refer to the 20th century as the "century of genocide." While most American students have some knowledge of the phenomenon of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany, they are not aware that the Holocaust of 1933-1945 was **not** the only instance of genocide in this century.

Provide students with either handout, or overhead transparency to copy, of the following information:

Genocidal Acts Since 1900

1904: The German government massacred 65,000 Hereros (out of a population of 80,000) in southern Africa

1915-1922: The Ottoman Turkish government killed about 1.5 million Armenians in an attempt to destroy all Armenians living in Turkey

1918-1921: The Ukrainians slaughtered between 100,000 and 250,000 Jews in over 2,000 separate pogroms

1932-1933: The Soviet Union planned a famine in the Ukraine which killed over eight million

1936-1939: Nearly 500,000 people were shot and killed in the Soviet Union for political reasons

1940-1951: The Soviet Union deported whole nations of peoples such as Germans, Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Meskhetians, Balkanians and Greeks from their native lands, in what has been labeled "The most obvious case of genocide in the U.S.S.R."

1939-1945: Nearly six million Jews in Europe were killed by the German Nazi regime. The Nazis also murdered nearly six million more people from various groups (Gypsies, the handicapped, religious minorities, Slavs, political and social opponents)

1950-1998: Chinese attempts to eradicate the Tibetans

1965: The government of Indonesia slaughtered up to 600,000 people it accused of being "communists"; many were political opponents of the government

1965-1972: The Tutsi killed between 100,000 and 300,000 Hutus in the African nation of Burundi

1971: Pakistan killed 1-3 million Bengalis in Bangladesh

1975-1979: Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were killed in a series of purges by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge government. Thousands more died from forced marches, slave labor and starvation. Altogether, between 1-3 million Cambodians were killed by their own government

1975-1998: An estimated 125,000 citizens (out of 600,000) of East Timor have been slain by Indonesian troops

United Nations Definition of Genocide

Following World War II, representatives of the newly created United Nations debated what should be included in a definition of genocide, concluding that: "genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such:

(a) Killing members of the group;
(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

Discuss with students what is not included in this definition (i.e.: political and social groups, the killing of handicapped people or homosexuals)
-have students develop and broader definition and discuss in class

Components of Genocide

Along with difficulties in defining genocide, students must be made aware there are no simple answers for understanding conditions that increase the possibility of genocide occurring. Some of the preconditions for genocide should be discussed, with the understanding that genocide does not **have** to occur in these situations:

1). When a ruling group labels a minority group as "inferior", and then supports this attitude with a system of discrimination which leaves the minority unprotected, the possibility of genocide taking place increases.

-white Australian settlers referred to Aborigines as "wild animals" and "hideous scandals to humanity" and established a system of segregation that forced the Aborigines to be removed from their homelands to live on "government-run settlements"

-the Nazis referred to Jews and Gypsies as "subhuman" and "vermin" and introduced a series of discriminatory laws and racial regulations which left these and other groups unprotected

2). When an unprotected minority is perceived as "causing" a country's problems, and hostile attitudes towards the minority are supported by the ruling government, the potential for genocide increases

-when Armenian leaders pressured the Ottoman Turks for reform and protection, the government labeled all Armenians as a dangerous element

-the Nazis blamed Jews and communists for causing Germany to lose the First World War and for all Germany's post-war economic problems

3). When a country becomes involved in a war, it is "easier" for a government to label a group of people as the "enemy". There also tends to be less interference from other nations because they are preoccupied with winning the war. This situation increases the likelihood that genocide will occur.

-it was during World War I that the Ottomans carried out a policy to eliminate the Armenian minority; the new Turkish leaders after the war continued the policy in order to gain complete control over the different groups within the country and to eliminate diversity as much as possible

-it was not until Germany went to war and invaded and occupied other European countries that the genocide policies of the Nazis were fully implemented

Types of Genocide

1). "Developmental Genocide": colonizers settle in a region and destroy native (indigenous) peoples

2). "Despotic Genocide": a ruler (despot) gains complete authority by eliminating any opposing group

3). "Retributive Genocide": two or more groups clash over "the structure of domination" in a society, and the group that loses is deported or killed

4). "Ideological Genocide": a group is identified as unworthy of protection or as a detriment or enemy of the society

Why Study Genocide and the Holocaust

Studying events and deeds which result in genocide can encourage a more serious look at violence and hatred occurring in the world today

-it can begin with something as "harmless" as racial/ethnic jokes or lyrics to popular songs and escalate into bullying and stereotyping

When people overlook particular injustices because they are either too busy or too content with their lives, group hatred and conflict can grow to such an extent that whole schools, communities and nations are undermined

If prevention of hatred and violence is to be given a real chance, then citizens need to make themselves aware of injustices, and they need to find ways to confront these destructive forces

Provide students with Martin Niemoller's (Protestant minister in Germany and survivor of Dachau concentration camp) quote and discuss:
"They came after the Jews, but I was not a Jew, so I did not object.
"Then they came after the Catholics, but I was not a Catholic, so I did not object.
"Then they came after the Trade Unionists, but I was not a Trade Unionist, so I did not object.
"Then they came after me, and there was no one left to object."

Students will have been given excerpt from "Ecidujerp, Prejudice" prior to class and will be prepared to discuss the reading
(Gersten, Irene, and Bliss, Betsy, Ecidujerp, Prejudice. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Franklin Watts, Inc., 1974)

EVALUATION
Students will write short answers to the following questions for grading purposes:
1. Explain how prejudices are learned

2. Give examples of how prejudices can be eliminated

3. Explain who is effected more by an act of prejudice (perpetrator or victim) and how.

4. Describe what genocide is and list necessary conditions for genocide to take place.

5. Identify four modern examples of genocide other than that of Nazi Germany, and explain what prompted these actions.

6. Explain how individuals can make a difference in confronting prejudice and acts of genocide.

THE WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

Teaching Strategies:

1. **Prepare a lecture on life in the ghettos, on collaboration and resistance, and on the Warsaw Uprising.**
2. **Small-group "brainstorming" activity**
3. **Have students read "The Warsaw Ghetto" in preparation for class discussion.**

Materials:

1. **Teacher notes on ghettos in Poland and the Uprising**
2. **Vocabulary terms related to genocide and prejudice**
3. **Secondary source readings on "The Warsaw Ghetto" and "Father of Orphans"**

Notes

Ghettos were never developed as an answer to the "racial problem" and were not established as permanent living quarters for the mass of people forced to live in them

-conceived as an aid to control and supervise Jews (and Gypsies) by concentrating them within certain areas

Ghettos served two additional purposes (whether intended or not):

1). due to demands of hard labor, insufficient food and with overcrowded and substandard sanitary living conditions, many Jews died
-resolved at least part of the "Jewish question"

2). ghettos provided a large concentration of cheap labor which Nazis and their collaborators eagerly exploited
-discuss Oskar Schindler (show school-approved clip from the film, "Schindler's List")
-discuss Oskar Schindler and what prompted him to become a Rescuer

Discuss Ghetto Features and Living Conditions

Confiscation of Jewish business, real estate & other properties held outside ghetto
-bans on use of public transportation and free movement outside the ghetto
-wearing of recognizable signs of being Jewish
-in Poland, this took the form of having to wear a white armband with a blue Star of David on it or yellow patches cut in the shape of the six pointed star
-patches had to be attached to both front and back of all outer garments
-had to be worn at all times

Ghettos were established in the poorest sections of cities in Poland
-before the war, these areas were mostly crowded Jewish neighborhoods
-all Jews in the city and the surrounding countryside were forced to live there
-all non-Jews were forced to relocate

-food rationed to the point of starvation:
food allocation in the Warsaw ghetto averaged 183 calories a day
(Poles outside the ghetto received 934, foreigners 1,790 and Germans 2,310)

-ghetto residents purchased food on the black market at exorbitant prices
-most could not pay the prices and slowly starved to death or died from disease
-children were used to steal food outside the ghetto
-if patrols guarding the wall caught these children, they would be beaten or shot

-few heating materials, poor water circulation and sanitary conditions were awful
-diseases such as typhoid and tuberculosis were frequent killers
-few medical supplies available, little electricity or other conveniences

-harsh rules and rigid curfews imposed by the Nazis
-attending or teaching school largely forbidden
-in most ghettos all cultural and religious activities were banned or severely limited
-no communications permitted with world outside the walls of the ghetto

-ghetto provided a captive population to exploit for forced labor
-minimal pay, 12-hour workday, 7 days a week, poor working conditions

Exploitation of Jewish Leaders

Nazis appointed a council of Jewish leaders to carry out their orders ("Judenrat")
-while powers were limited, these councils faced task of trying to organize ghetto life under constant pressure and threats from the Nazis
-Nazis shrewdly recognized potential of using Jewish leaders to coerce the population into cooperating
-as deportations to the camps increased, the Judenrat was forced to provide set numbers of Jews, or they and their families would be deported

-role of these Jewish councils remains a highly controversial and emotional topic
-many are condemned for willingly complying with Nazi demands
-extreme differences existed: some complied and some resisted
-discuss examples of Chaim Rumkowski in Lodz ghetto vs. Judenrat council in Kovno
-Rumkowski was head of council who learned of Auschwitz and tried to conceal this information from everyone else
-provided slave labor and forbade food smuggling
-allowed children to be taken from their mothers
-rationalization: in order to save some, many had to be sacrificed
-two accounts of Rumkowski's end:
-deported to Auschwitz, he was recognized from other Lodz survivors and strangled
-upon arrival, demanded preferential treatment from the S. S. and was shot

-Judenrat appeared on the surface to cooperate, while secretly worked with the underground
-children to be deported were hidden and young people smuggled out to join the the partisans
-nearly all were tortured horribly and executed for refusing to reveal anything

Unarmed Resistance and "Heroes"

Resistance took many forms:
-secret religious ceremonies and cultural activities (theater, music, readings)
-schools conducted in secret locations
-false warning signs of contagious diseases used to conceal meeting places
-medical, technical and scientific equipment concealed
-journals, diaries and detailed records kept of all Nazi activities for future use
-among the most treasured records discovered after the war were the archives of **Emmanuel Ringlebaum**, a "hero" who established a secret society in Poland to keep a documented record of what was happening
-underground newspapers and presses reported news revealed from hidden radios
-anyone caught in any of these actions was summarily executed

In terms of unarmed resistance, possibly no ghetto resident should be considered a "hero" than **Janusz Korczak**, director of the Jewish orphanage in Warsaw
-a respected physician, educator and writer, he had numerous opportunities to gain safe passage out of the ghetto
-when the orphanage was liquidated, he chose to say with his beloved children, accompanying them and his medical assistants who also had chosen to remain to Treblinka where they were all killed
-accounts vary as to whether he distributed poison on the train so that all of them died before arriving or, instead, that while in a state of terrible exhaustion, and knowing full well the fate that awaited them, he spent his remaining hours going among the children assuring them of his continued presence and comforting them in their fear

The Uprising

Roundups and deportations of Jews living illegally in the ghetto were frequent
-in January, 1943, a Nazi raid into the ghetto resulted in the liquidation of the hospital (patients were shot and the personnel were deported)
-factories which used ghetto workers were closed and their workers deported

-the ghetto underground (ill-prepared) offered armed resistance for four days
-first case of street fighting in occupied Poland

-on April 19, 1943, a full German force moved into the ghetto to resume deportations
-unprepared for the level of resistance they encountered
-revolt led by young **Mordecai Anielewicz** and a core of about 750 young Jewish

fighters who rose on behalf of the 40,000 ghetto residents
-all that remained of the original 500,000 that had been transferred or deported

-with many residents helping any way they could, armed only with rifles, grenades and home-made bombs, the small band held out against a massive, heavy-armored, and battle-trained German assault
-after suffering heavy casualties, German forces changed tactics and burned down the ghetto one building at a time
-rather than surrender, the leaders of the resistance committed suicide by blowing up their command bunker, Mila 18

-the Warsaw ghetto resistance fighters had held out against the German army from April 19 to May 16, 1943 (27 days)
-marked the first instance in occupied Europe when any urban population had risen in revolt
-resistance soon developed in other ghettos

-courage of Warsaw ghetto uprising will always serve to distinguish the valor of the human spirit even in the face of unconquerable odds
-encourage students to read fictional works on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising by John Hersey (The Wall) or Leon Uris (Mila 18)

Organize students into small groups. Ask them to brainstorm as to what suggestions they can make about what the people of the ghettos could have done to fight back. Have one member of each group present the results from each group, allowing the entire class to discuss the suggestions.

EVALUATION

Students will write short answers to the following questions for grading purposes:

1. What was life in the Polish ghetto like? Describe the purpose of the ghettos, the living conditions, the governing body and community life within the ghettos.

2. Describe what took place during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and its significance.

3. Identify and discuss several forms of resistance to the Nazis in the Polish ghettos, including in your answer the most celebrated instance of unarmed resistance.

4. Why are Mordecai Anielewicz and Janusz Korczak considered heroes?

AUSCHWITZ AND FATHER KOLBE

Teaching Strategies:

1. **Prepare a lecture on the nature of concentration camps.**
2. **Relate the story of Maximilian Kolbe at Auschwitz.**
3. **Have students read assigned readings in preparation for class discussion.**

Materials:

1. **Teacher notes on concentration camps and Maximilian Kolbe**
2. **Photographs taken at, and postcards purchased at Auschwitz to be distributed**
3. **Videotape on the Holocaust (suggested: "In Memory of the Camps")**
4. **Secondary source readings: "Oswiecim Killings Placed at 4,000,000" and "A Survivor Remembers"**

Assign students the readings: "Oswiecim Killings Placed at 4,000,000" and "A Survivor Remembers"
-have them prepare notes on their reaction to these readings for class discussion at the conclusion of class lecture and video

This part of the lesson should begin with the class viewing a video on the concentration camps (I use "In Memory of the Camps" which I obtained through PBS; it documents the British liberation of Belsen)
-the teacher should prepare students for the brutal nature of the presentation with a brief lecture on the nature of the concentration camps
-it should be left to the teacher's discretion how detailed or intensive he/she wants to make this presentation (notes I will use follow)

Notes on the Camps

From all over Europe, trains needed for the German war effort were diverted to carry Jews and other "undesirables" to their death in specially constructed camps and killing centers across Germany and Poland (as well as in other occupied countries)
-location for a camp was often determined by whether or not the site was near rails
-killing centers were remarkably close to major population centers, each with a large Jewish population
-other camps were built in rural areas to escape easy detection
-those designed as slave labor compounds were built near the particular industrial supplies or commercial materials needed

-the S. S. had to pay the railroad for the use of the trains
-in some cases, the victims themselves paid the rate of regular passengers
-so intense was the Nazi desire to kill Jews tat even towards the end of the war, when trains were desperately needed to move German military personnel and supplies, not a single train assigned for "special convoy" was relinquished

It was understood by all ranking Nazis that the true nature of the camps and their purpose in the "Final Solution" was to be kept absolutely secret
-large scale deportations were covered up as "relocation in the East"
-a euphemism for transport to the death camps

-Jews were ordered to pace a single suitcase and appear quickly
-they were then marched, under guard, to central transport points and were then loaded into overcrowded cattle cars (sometimes 200 or more passengers)
-forced to stand for hours, no privacy, no conveniences
-there was little or no food or water and one bucket that served as a toilet
-many died from heat in the summer, exposure in the winter or exhaustion
-those who died remained standing next to the living until the train stopped

After hours, days or weeks, the trains arrived at the camp
-the doors were opened and the passengers confronted by barking guard dogs, blaring orders from loudspeakers, brutal guards and officers, and people frantically searching for loved ones on other trains

-strict order was maintained by continuing to conceal the true purpose of the camps
-over the entrance to most camps was the slogan: "Arbeit Macht Frei" ("Work Makes Freedom")
-at Auschwitz, the platform was decorated as a village train station and a camp band serenaded arrivals

Pass around class pictures taken and purchased at Auschwitz-Birkenau
Auschwitz was a massive extermination center which covered 40 square kilometers (located near the Polish town of Oswiecim)
-the base camp was Auschwitz I
-three kilometers away stood Birkenau, or Auschwitz II (three times as large)
-Birkenau was the death camp
-there no effort was made to deceived the doomed passengers
-the people were immediately rushed into sheds where they were ordered to disrobe and were then chased from the disrobing barracks directly into the gas chambers
-some were told they were to be "disinfected" in the showers
-before disrobing, they were told to remember the number of the hook where they put their clothes so that they could be reclaimed later
-many were given small bars of soap as they entered the chamber
-the doors were then closed and instead of water, deadly gas (Zyklon B) was released into the chamber
-bodies were removed and searched for hidden valuables (gold teeth pulled)
-all valuables were collected and sorted through for their worth to the Nazis
-the bodies were then placed inside crematoria (ovens) and burned

-at Auschwitz, the general procedure was to hurry the prisoners from the train and

line them up for inspection
-often done by medical doctors, men and women were separated
-pregnant women, young children, the elderly and the sick or frail were sent by truck immediately to Birkenaŭ
-those not chosen for immediate death were sent to showers for disinfecting
-their clothes and personal possessions were taken from them and they were completely shaven by prison barbers
-at Auschwitz and the other large camps, prisoners were tattooed with numbers permanently identifying them

-prisoners were then given old clothes or striped pajamas as their prison uniforms
-shoes were often heavy wooden clogs that continually abraided the skin
-during each phase of the process, the guards screamed and beat prisoners (often breaking bones or cracking skulls) or shot them for not moving fast enough

Conditions within the camps were inhuman
-poor living conditions:
-surrounded by electrified barbed wire, machine gun towers and guard dogs
-slept up to eight persons on wooden shelves that could barely accommodate one
-improper facilities to maintain personal hygiene (no privacy for body functions)
-dietary conditions abysmal (no meat or fresh vegetables); low caloric intakes
-long hours of grueling manual labor nearly every day of the year
-instant death for those who could not keep up with the pace of labor
-little real medical treatment or attention
-some camps had special barracks reserved for barbarous medical "experiments" or other specialized torture chambers for interrogation
-at Auschwitz and other camps, doctors like **Josef Mengele** conducted experiments on twins, conducted amputations without anesthesia, performed castrations and injected foreign substances into women's reproductive systems
-to illustrate just a few of the barbarisms

-most survivors remember the "appells" as the most punishing ordeal
-every morning the prisoners had to rush from their barracks and stand on line, often for hours, while roll was taken (in all kinds of weather)
-prisoners who had tried to escape were tortured and executed in front of their fellow prisoners to serve as an example
-if prisoners had succeeded in escaping, or if there had been a rules infraction, prisoners would be randomly selected for torture and execution

One inmate at Auschwitz was **Maximilian Kolbe**, a Franciscan priest
-Kolbe had supervised a friary near Warsaw, where he and the other friars sheltered 3000 Poles and over 1500 Jews from the Nazis
-in May, 1941, the friary was closed down and Kolbe was sent to Auschwitz
-Kolbe carried on his priestly work secretly, hearing confessions, celebrating Mass with smuggled wine and bread, and comforting and praying with non-Catholics

To discourage escapes, the rule was that if one man escaped, ten would be killed
-in July, 1941, a man from Kolbe's barrack escaped
-the remaining men of the barrack were marched out and ten were selected at random to be taken to the death room

-one of the ten men chosen, Francis Gajowniczek, began sobbing and begged for his life, "My wife and my children!"
-the S. S. guards and the commandant ignored him
-suddenly there was movement in the ranks of prisoners as Kolbe stepped forward

-survivors recall that Kolbe walked firmly with a peaceful look on his face
-"Herr Kommandant, I wish to make a request, please," he said politely
-survivors recalled that they were amazed he was not shot instantly
-the Commandant asked Kolbe what he wanted, to which Kolbe responded that, "I want to die in place of this prisoner. I have no wife or children. Besides, I'm old and not worth anything."
-the Commandant asked Kolbe who he was, "A Catholic priest" was his reply
-the Commandant kicked Gajowniczek and ordered him back into the ranks

-Kolbe and the other nine men were placed in the cell and left there to starve
-the priest encouraged the others with prayers, psalms and meditations for two weeks until only he and three others were still alive
-the four were killed with injections of carbolic acid on August 14, 1941

-it should be noted that Maximilian Kolbe was canonized as a saint and a martyr in 1982 by Pope John Paul II (Francis Gajowniczek was at the canonization Mass)
-the Pope has referred to Kolbe as "the patron saint of our difficult century"

Ask students to discuss their reactions to the readings assigned at the outset of the lesson, as well as their reactions to the video, photographs and lecture
-ask how they might have coped and survived in a Nazi concentration camp
-how might surviving a concentration camp affect your view of life and the world

EVALUATION

Students will write short answers to the following questions for grading purposes:

1. What is the difference between Nazi killing centers and the concentration camps (death camps) where so many people died?

2. What was the routine used to process prisoners in the concentration camps?

3. What is it about Auschwitz that makes it "stand out" among the camps?

4. Discuss the phenomenon of Maximilian Kolbe and his sacrificing his life for that of another man. Should he be considered a hero of the Holocaust? What did the Pope mean when he called Kolbe, "the patron saint of our troubled century"?

RAOUL WALLENBERG

Teaching Strategies:

1. **Prepare a lecture on Raoul Wallenberg's efforts to save Hungarian Jews.**
2. **Present vocabulary terms for students to define, then discuss definitions.**
3. **Have students read "The Fate of the Hungarian Jews" and "Raoul Wallenberg Rescuer" in preparation for class discussion.**

Materials:

1. **Teacher notes on Raoul Wallenberg**
2. **Photographs of Wallenberg and the Wallenberg Memorial in Budapest**
3. **Secondary source reading on "The Fate of the Hungarian Jews" and "Raoul Wallenberg Rescuer"**

Assign students the readings on "The Fate of the Hungarian Jews" and "Raoul Wallenberg Rescuer" in preparation for class discussion

Notes on Raoul Wallenberg

By the Spring of 1944, Nazi Germany had annihilated nearly every significant Jewish community in Europe except for the 700,000 Jews that remained in Hungary
-mostly because Hungary had entered the war on Germany's side in 1941
-plans for the murder of these Jews were being formulated by **Adolph Eichmann**

-following Germany's defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad in Russia, Hungarian leaders opened lines of communication with the Allies to negotiate a separate peace
-Hitler demanded continued support from **Miklos Horthy**, the head of state
-Horthy refused to meet these demands, and Germany invaded Hungary on March 19, 1944
-soon after the deportation of the Jews started, with most being shipped to Auschwitz-Birkenau

-the Germans began by deporting the Jews from the countryside, providing the Jewish community in Budapest a brief reprieve
-in their desperation they sought help from the embassies of neutral countries
-provisional passes were issued to Jews with special connections to these countries

-the most successful operation was conducted by the Royal Swedish Legation in Budapest, headed by **Per Anger**
-issuing 700 passes in a few weeks, the Legation requested additional help from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm
-in June, 1944, **Raoul Wallenberg**, a young businessman who was familiar with Budapest from business trips, was appointed first secretary at the Swedish Legation
-he was given carte blanche to deal with whom he wanted without having to contact the ambassador
-he also was granted permission to send diplomatic couriers beyond channels

By the time Wallenberg arrived in July, 1944, Eichmann and the S.S. had removed over 400,000 Jewish men, women and children
-there were only about 230,000 Jews remaining in and around Budapest
-an Eichmann plan to enact a one-day "Final Solution" in Hungary was canceled at the last minute by the Nazi hierarchy
-probably influenced by an appeal from Horthy following a personal letter he had received from King Gustav V of Sweden

Wallenberg now moved quickly before the Nazis changed their minds
-he did not use traditional methods of diplomacy, relying upon everything from bribes to extortion to threats
-shocked at first, the legation staff began helping when they saw positive results

-first major task was designing a Swedish protective pass for Jews that both German and Hungarian officials would respect
-official looking enough, Wallenberg was eventually able to secure over 4,500 of these protective passes
-his staff of several hundred were all Hungarian Jews, thus gaining protection

In August 1944, Horthy fired his pro-German prime minister Sztojay
-the situation improved considerably for Jews, especially when responsibility for "the Jewish problem in Hungary" was taken away from Eichmann
-thanks in part to diplomatic pressure brought by Sweden through Wallenberg
-Wallenberg was convinced the worst was over, as Soviet forces were nearing Hungary

On October 15, Horthy delivered a nationwide radio address declaring a desire for peace with the Soviets
-he was immediately overthrown and replaced by the pro-Nazi leader of the Arrow Cross organization, **Ferenc Szalasi**
-the Arrow Cross had been employing Nazi-like tactics against Hungarian Jews since 1941
-Szalasi and the Arrow Cross restored control of the "Jewish problem" to Eichmann and the S. S.

Wallenberg resumed his tireless efforts on behalf of Hungarian Jews
-he established some 30 "Swedish houses" in the Pest part of the city where Jews could seek refuge
-flying a Swedish flag, Wallenberg declared them part of Swedish territory
-the population of these houses rose to as high as 15,000
-Wallenberg's work inspired the legations of other neutral nations to follow his example and issue protective passes and open safe houses

-when the newly installed Hungarian Nazi government canceled acceptance of these passes, Wallenberg convinced Baroness Elizabeth Kemeny, wife of the new

Hungarian foreign minister, to intervene and persuade her husband to restore their validity

During this time, Eichmann implemented a series of "death marches" designed to deport Jews by foot from Hungarian soil
-a 200-kilometer march to the Austrian border that killed hundreds
-Wallenberg followed, handing out protective passes, food and medicine
-he threatened and bribed Nazi guards into releasing those he had given passes

-when the Jews were transported by train, Wallenberg often climbed on top of the idle trains at the station, sticking protective passes inside the cars
-ordered to open fire, German soldiers were so impressed by his courage that they aimed over his head
-Wallenberg would then approach the guards and demand the release of those inside the cars with passes

-Wallenberg's department at the Swedish legation grew to over 340 persons
-another 700 people lived inside the building, bringing to over 1000 the number of Jews he was openly protecting

By the end of 1944, the minimal level of law and order was disappearing as the Nazis and their Arrow Cross allies realized defeat was at hand
-Wallenberg bribed a high ranking police official and Arrow Cross member, **Pa'l Szalay**, into helping his organization
-after the war, Szalay was the only Arrow Cross official who was not executed for war crimes, in recognition for his cooperation with Wallenberg

In January, 1945, Wallenberg discovered Eichmann planned a total massacre of Budapest's largest ghetto in the Pest part of the city
-he sent his allay Szalay with a note to the General August Schmidthuber, commander of German forces in Hungary, that Wallenberg would make sure the general would be held personally responsible for the massacre after the war
-Schmidthuber refused to cooperate with Eichmann, thus preventing the massacre

Two days later Soviet forces entered Budapest and found 97,000 Jews alive in Budapest's two ghettos
-in total, 120,000 Jews survived the Nazi extermination in Hungary

-according to Per Anger, Wallenberg's friend and colleague, Raoul Wallenberg should be credited with saving at least 100,000 Jews from the Holocaust

Wallenberg left Budapest on January 17, 1945 to discuss the nature of his rescue mission with Soviet officials; he has been missing ever since
-both he and Per Anger have been honored by the state of Israel as "Righteous Gentiles" ("Righteous Ones of the Nations of the World")

Teacher should lead discussion on the readings, "The Fate of the Hungarian Jews" and "Raoul Wallenberg Rescuer"
-discuss "Questions for Discussion" on the handout
-focus on question of whether or not the Allies should have bombed the rail lines leading into the camps
-also, whether or not they should have bombed the camps themselves

-discuss Raoul Wallenberg and what drove him to take such extraordinary chances on behalf of the Jews of Hungary
-explore possible explanations as to what happened to Raoul Wallenberg (show students pictures of Raoul Wallenberg Memorial Park in Budapest)

To conclude this lesson, teacher should show the video, "American and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference" and discuss it thoroughly with students
-a recounting of the limited actions taken by the United States government on behalf of Jewish refugees from the late 1930s and throughout World War II

EVALUATION

Students will write short answers to the following questions for grading purposes:

1. Explain how Raoul Wallenberg rescued Hungarian Jews.

2. Discuss the arguments for and against Allied bombings of the rail lines leading into the concentration camps; take a position one way or the other and defend it.

3. In the Talmud can be found the following statement: "To save one life is as if you saved the world"; compare and contrast the actions of Maximilian Kolbe and Raoul Wallenberg. Is Wallenberg a greater hero for saving over 100,000 lives, is Kolbe a greater hero for his "one for one" sacrifice, or are they equally heroic?

4. It is very easy to condemn the actions (or inactions) of the people of and governments of Hungary and Poland, as well as other European nations, in response to the actions of Nazi Germany in carrying out the "Final Solution." Given what you have learned from viewing "America and the Holocaust", where do you place blame for what happened?

SOURCES FOR TEACHING THESE LESSONS

Books

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Furman, Harry (Ed.). The Holocaust and Genocide: A Search for Conscience. State of New Jersey, Department of Education, New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1983.

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Ringelblum, Emmanuel. Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto. (edited and translated by Jacob Sloan). McGraw Hill: New York, 1958.

Stadtler, Bea. The Holocaust: A History of Courage and Resistance. Behrman House, Inc. N.J., 1973.

Suhl, Yuri (Ed.). They Fought Back. Crown Publishers, New York, 1975.

Treece, Patricia, A Man for Others: Maximilian Kolbe, Saint of Auschwitz, Sophia Press.

Videos

"America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference" from the series, "The American Experience"

"In Memory of the Camps", PBS documentary on the British liberation of Belsen

STUDENT READING

"ECIDUJERP, PREJUDICE"

Prejudice is an attitude, a rigid emotional response toward all members of a particular group or social category. It is generally an unfavorable opinion formed before the facts are known, which results in hatred or intolerance.

In this section, authors Irene Gersten and Betsy Bliss explain the meaning of prejudice. As indicated by the authors, prejudice can be motivated by, among other reasons, economic interest, conforming to group expectations, and/or the difficulty people have in accepting their own weaknesses.

Prejudice can be expressed in a variety of ways such as antilocution (bad-mouthing), avoidance, discrimination, physical attack and genocide. As the worst expression of hate, genocide represents the systematic murder of an entire people because they belong to a specific nation, race or religion.

Prejudice and Ignorance

Suppose that you had never met an old person. Suppose that your friends told you that "All old people are crazy." Would you believe them? You might - if you had never known an old person. That is what happens when we insist on knowing only people just like ourselves.

This kind of prejudice is really ignorant - prejudice due to not knowing better. It is expressed by many people who keep themselves separate and do not mix with other groups.

Ignorant prejudice was what those white residents felt when the black families began to move into their neighborhood. But when they were actually living next door to one another, they started to look at their black neighbors as individuals and to see that they were not noisy or troublemakers, but were honest, warm, hardworking people, very much like themselves.

Real Prejudice

It is important to remember that there is a difference between ignorance and prejudice. Ignorance means forming opinion without really knowing the facts. The prejudice that often results from ignorance does not necessarily mean hateful feelings.

Real prejudice, on the other hand, occurs when we choose to keep bad opinions even when we have a chance to know better. Prejudice occurs when a person refuses to change his mind - even when the facts show him that he is wrong.

Mark is an example of a person with real prejudice.

When Mark was young, all of his friends and classmates told him that all black people were "lazy" and "dirty." Mark took their word for it.

He believed them because he had never seen a person with dark skin. There were no black people in his school, his neighborhood, or his Boy Scout troop. When he went to the movies, he hardly ever saw black people in films. Those that he did see were shown as "lazy" and "dirty." The same was true on television. Mark was a very protected person who had little touch with the world outside of his own group.

As Mark grew older and left his neighborhood, he began to see some people with dark skin. But they seemed so different from him. They looked different. They dressed differently and they even talked differently. Mark stayed away from them because they were strange and he was afraid of them. Mark covered his fear by saying that "they" were "dirty" and "lazy."

When Mark entered high school, he met Jeff, who was black. Jeff was in most of his classes and Mark was forced to see that Jeff was neat, well-dressed and very hardworking. But Mark refused to change his bad opinions of all dark-skinned people. Even though he knew Jeff to be much like himself, his prejudice would not allow him to see Jeff as a complete individual. Mark could not see beyond Jeff's dark skin. He said to himself, "Jeff is different from other blacks. It is still true that all those people are "dirty" and "lazy." Mark simply could not see that "all those people" are individuals just like Jeff.

Prejudice and Profit

Why do Mark and people like him refuse to give up their prejudices even when the facts show them to be wrong? Why do people prejudge others in the first place? Why has man, for as long as we can remember, been cruel to his fellow man? Why is prejudice as much a problem today as it was four hundred years ago?

To answer these questions isn't easy. Mostly, we act in a prejudiced manner because we expect to gain something.

Each individual is a complex being, with many different needs, desires and goals. And though people are guilty of prejudice because they believe they will gain something, what it is that they want to gain is different in almost every case.

Conforming Prejudice

A very common type of prejudice comes from our need to have the same values as the group to which we belong. We tend to feel safe within our own group. It makes us feel important. To know we will be accepted by that group, we adopt the group's thinking. When the group thinking is prejudiced, we often accept this thinking because we are afraid to go against the group.

A college student recently wrote about an example of this kind of prejudice. It occurred on his first day of high school. He had been talking with a boy of his own age when one of the older students came over to him and said, "Don't you know that Harry is a Jew?" He had never before met a Jew and really didn't care whether or not Harry, whom he started to like, was a Jew. But he admitted that the tone of the older boy's voice was enough to convince him that he had better not make Harry his friend.

When we act in this way, we are clearly in the wrong. There is nothing wrong in wanting to belong to a certain group because we want to feel a part of something. We all need friends and want to feel safe and needed. But there is something terribly wrong when we become a part of the group and are no longer an individual. By giving up what is special in each of us, we can no longer act or think on our own. We become a group body. We are afraid to make a step on our own two feet. We act in a prejudiced way not because we believe the others are not as good as we are, but because we are afraid of being "different" and of having opinions different from those of our friends, classmates and family.

Scapegoating

There is one kind of prejudice that occurs when we want to go along with the opinions of our friends. There is a more dangerous kind of prejudice that stems from feeling unsure about ourselves and from the questions we have about our own worth as individuals. It is called scapegoating.

It is part of human nature for people to compare themselves with one another. It is part of our society for individuals to compete with one another for money and personal rewards. Often our feeling of being not as good, as attractive, as wealthy, as skilled, or as successful as others makes us need to blame someone else for our own shortcomings.

It is difficult for people to accept their own weaknesses. It is much easier to blame our problems on others. When we look down on someone else, we seem so much taller.

The word "scapegoating" comes from Biblical times. Then a scapegoat was let loose in the wilderness after the high priest had placed the sins of the people on its head. All of the failures, the shortcomings, and the shameful things that the people were guilty of were put onto the goat. Sending the goat out into the woods was the people's way of separating themselves from their guilt. They were no longer responsible for their own actions. Today we use the word scapegoat to describe a person or a group of people who are blamed unfairly.

Scapegoating is in many ways like labeling. Both are lazy ways of thinking. Both can prevent a person from seeing himself as he really is. When we put people into groups, we hide ourselves or other people behind name tags. We see only a part of what people really are, not the whole picture.

Our world is full of people like Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones is very upset about what is happening in this country. Mr. Jones says, "The reason we have riots is that there are outsiders in this country." He adds, "If we could only get rid of the outsiders, everything would be fine."

Riots, like most problems, have many causes. Solutions are hard to find and Mr. Jones doesn't want to bother to find out what all of the causes are. It is much easier to find someone to blame, to find a scapegoat. For Mr. Jones, outsiders are handy scapegoats.

It is usually easy to recognize the Mr. Joneses of the world. They are the people who can say, "If only we didn't have so-and-so, everything would be okay." These persons will find one enemy to explain everything that is wrong. "If only we didn't have Jews." or "If only we didn't have hippies."

But nothing is that simple.

Prejudiced people who scapegoat say the same things about all groups that are different from their own. No matter who is the prejudiced person, he warns everyone against "marrying those people" or "believing anything those people say." You can substitute almost any kind of human being for "those people," but the prejudiced person's remark and warnings will be the same.

That is because the scapegoater does not hate any one person in particular. He hates a group that is different, and his hatred covers all the members of that group.

Defeating Prejudice

When people say the kinds of things that Mark, for example, said about Jeff, they do not always know that they are guilty of prejudice. Most prejudiced people try to hide their true fears from themselves as well as from others. These people feel good only when they believe that there are others who are not quite as good as they are.

Practically nobody will admit to being prejudiced. Practically everybody agrees that prejudice is cruel and ugly. That is why people have been forced to defend their prejudice. And that is why their defenses have been pretty strange!

In the nineteenth century, for example, many people tried to use a religious excuse to cover their prejudice. They said that slavery was a way of introducing the Christian religion to the Africans, who had their own, different religion. It was obvious to the majority of people that this was not a very good excuse, and so many people tried to find a better one. These people turned to the idea that some people were born better than others - smarter, nicer-looking, with better manners, and more honest.

Today we know that this is completely untrue. Today we know that, any way you look at it, there is no excuse good enough to defend prejudice.

Source: Gersten, Irene, and Bliss, Betsy *Ecidujerp, Prejudice.* Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Franklin Watts, Inc., 1974.

STUDENT READING

THE WARSAW GHETTO

Warsaw is the capital city of Poland. Before 1940 it had a very large Jewish population. Jews lived in Poland before the year 1200. They had settled in Warsaw around 1414, even before Columbus discovered America.

On September 1, 1939, the Germans under Adolf Hitler attacked Poland. Many Jews volunteered to fight in the army with the Poles against the Germans, but they were overwhelmed by superior German military equipment and trained soldiers. By September 28, less than a month later, all Poland had been overrun by the Nazis.

In 1940 a Jewish ghetto was established in Warsaw and a brick wall built around it. The wall was to keep the Jews inside the ghetto and all others out. The wall enclosed approximately 840 acres. Since one square mile is 640 acres, 840 acres is about one and a third miles square or 24 square blocks. Into this area, where about 160,000 were originally, somewhere between 330,000 and 500,000 Jews were now forced to live.

Jews were forced to leave homes in other parts of the city and to move into the ghetto. They had no wagons to move furniture and clothing and so took only what they could carry on their backs or in hand-wagons or baby buggies. Often three and four families were forced to live together in one room.

The Germans did not provide enough food for even half the number of people in the ghetto. The bowl of soup that was eaten was sometimes boiled from straw. It was forbidden to bring food into the ghetto and though some small amounts were smuggled in, many Jews starved to death.

Since the Jews had brought only the clothing they could carry, and since the Nazis forced them to give up fur coats and even coats with fur collars, they had little warm clothing. Although small quantities of coal were smuggled into the ghetto, it was very costly and most Jews could not afford it. Polish winters are long and very cold, and so from lack of warm clothing and heat many Jews froze to death.

Because they were made to live in such crowded conditions, the terrible disease, typhoid, began to spread. There was little water and it was not fit for drinking. Sanitary conditions were very poor. Many Jews in the ghetto died from typhoid, and most were sickened through weakness.

Life was bitter. A few Jews exploited other Jews, a handful thought they would save their lives by working with the Germans, but most of the Jews behaved in a humane fashion, and many even heroically.

Januscz Korczak, the doctor and director of the orphanage in the ghetto; Adam Czerniakow, the leader of the Jewish Council; Emmanuel Ringelblum, one of the historians of the ghetto--all were special kinds of heroes. All three could have escaped, but they chose to remain with

their people and die with them. In addition to Ringelblum's, at least two other diaries have been found that relate the happenings and daily life of the ghetto.

Mary Berg, the daughter of an American citizen, was imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto when she was just sixteen. She began writing her diary even earlier, when she was fifteen, during the siege of the city of Warsaw. Her diary ends in March 1944, when she was put on a ship with her mother and father bound for the United States. In between, because she was an American citizen, Mary was sent to a prison instead of a concentration camp.

From the notes of Emanuel Ringelblum. Ringelblum was a student of Jewish history. When he found himself trapped in the Warsaw Ghetto, he decided to record in his notebooks everything which would help those who survived to understand what really happened in the Ghetto.

Another laughable order is about the First Aid car.

The Star of David on the car of the Jewish social self-help, in which the sick are taken to Otwock, is to be considerably enlarged and, what is most important, its color must be yellow--"Jew-yellow."

It won't take long before we are ordered to paint our gates, trams, houses, streets, faces, and perhaps even the sky above us, yellow.

Still another diary was discovered that had been kept by a man named Chaim A. Kaplan. Chaim Kaplan was a religious Jew and remained so until his death. His diary begins on September 1, 1939, and ends in August 1942. Chaim Kaplan describes the ghetto like this: "If it were said the sun has darkened for us at noon, it would be true. We will rot within the narrow streets and crooked lanes in which tens of thousands of people wander, idle and full of despair...What good will ten decagrams of coarse bread a week do? There is nowhere to earn a penny, and now a loaf of coarse bread costs three zlotys, a kilo of butter 30 zlotys." (A zloty in that time of inflated prices was approximately what a dollar would be to us.)

Emanuel Ringelblum, the historian, speaks in his diary of attempts to grow food for the ghetto. Zionist youth organization--whose members became the leaders and the majority of the fighters in the uprising--tried to plant vegetables on tiny patches of land. Small gardens were planted on the places where houses had been burned down. Vegetables were grown on balconies and even rooftops.

In spite of all the filth and starvation, some of the leaders tried to raise the low spirits of the inhabitants of the ghetto. Although schools for children were forbidden, they existed underground on all levels. In back rooms, on long benches, near a table, schoolchildren sat and learned. In time of danger, the children learned to hide their books under their clothes. There were classes and lectures for adults. There were also lectures and classes for medical students; laboratories were established. Theater groups performed plays in Yiddish right up until the time the ghetto was destroyed. Artists, musicians, and writers in the ghetto were encouraged.

Chaim Kaplan writes, "The idea that all Jews are responsible for each other has stopped being merely a slogan. Courtyard committees have been set up and are taking care of all the

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residents of the courtyard, even middle-class and wealthy ones. They established food kitchens and a permanent fund for soup kitchens." The ghetto was made up of apartment buildings. Each set of apartments had a courtyard, so many residents used one courtyard. Therefore each group of apartments had its own courtyard committee. Chaim Kaplan ends his paragraph by saying, "When historians come to write the history of the courtyard committees, let them end their chapter with the blessing, May the Lord remember them with favor."

Kaplan even tells in his diary how Hanukkah was celebrated in 1940. Hanukkah parties were held in every courtyard. "We arranged a celebration in our courtyard for which we charged, and then gave the proceeds toward feeding the poor in our courtyard. There was even a speech full of jokes, scientific and historical talks in Yiddish and Hebrew." He finishes this passage by saying, "At a time like this, there is no better cure than to be a believer in God. Even gentiles are amazed to see our will to live."

From time to time thousands of Jews from other communities were forced into the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Jews living there had to find room for them, and share their meager food supplies with these strangers.

Kaplan wrote, "There is even dancing, although the stomach is empty. It is almost a mitzvah to dance. The more one dances, the more it is a sign of his belief in the eternity of Israel. Every dance is a protest against our oppressors."

Kaplan felt that the residents of the ghetto tried their best to assist fellow Jews in misfortune. There was a Self-Aid organization that raised half a million zlotys to support the needy. It was a unity built upon tragedy--this desire and need to help each other.

The Nazi idea of having a little fun was to come into the ghetto to beat up old people, shoot children, and help themselves to anything they wanted. But a time came when Germans dared not come within the ghetto walls, except in large groups, armed with machine guns. They learned to fear and respect a small resistance group that organized to fight. The Jewish Fighter's Organization, headed by a young man named Mordechai Anilewitz (sic.) [9], was responsible for this change.

Source: Stadtler, Bea. *The Holocaust: A History of Courage and Resistance.* Behrman House, Inc. N.J. 1973. pp. 55-62.

STUDENT READING

FATHER OF ORPHANS

Some time ago, a Jewish physician who had been in the Warsaw Ghetto hospital was asked, "Perhaps you knew Januscz (sic.)[11] Korczak?"

Softly he answered, "Knew him? Yes, I knew him well. There was only one Januscz Korczak in the whole world--only one man like him."

Januscz Korczak was a pediatrician, a children's doctor. He was also an educator, interested in progressive, modern education. In addition he was a writer of children's stories, and the director of an orphanage. Because he cared for each child in the orphanage as his own, he soon began to be called "Father of Orphans."

In the year 1879, Henryk Goldszmit was born into a Jewish home in Warsaw, Poland. When he grew up and began writing stories for children, he took the name Januscz Korczak. This had been the name of a make-believe hero in a Polish novel, and this became Henryk Goldszmit's pen name--and the name we know him by today.

Korczak's father was a lawyer, and in the middle-class home in the large Polish city in which he was brought up, the lad scarcely knew he was Jewish. His father died when he was very young; his childhood was lonely. As he grew older, he supported himself by teaching. In visiting the slums of Warsaw, he became interested in how the poor children were living and how they were being educated. In 1903 he graduated from the University of Warsaw, and continued his studies in medicine, specializing in pediatrics.

Although he could have been the physician of the richest families in Warsaw, he chose to take care of the children of slum families. He was the doctor who accepted "undesirable" house calls which other young physicians refused. He took time to stay and play with his little patients. He cared for many of these children without a fee, or, as he once explained, he took a symbolic kopek, since a "physician who takes no fee does not help the patient."

More and more he became involved in the care and welfare of poor and orphaned children, and finally, in 1911, he gave up his hospital activities and successful private practice to become the head of a large Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. His House of Orphans at 92 Krochmalna Street became famous as one of the first institutions in the world to bring up children in an atmosphere of self-respect, affection, and self-expression. Discipline was based on a set of rules adopted by a committee of children selected by children. Duties were assigned by the children, and a children's "court" judged those who broke the rules. The youngsters even published their own newspaper. With inspiration, insight, and devotion, Korczak and his assistant Stefa showed what could be done under difficult conditions.

From "Januscz Korczak's Last Walk" by Hanna Morkowicz-Olczakowa. Courage and resistance during the Holocaust took many forms. The "last walk" was a quiet, but forceful statement of moral victory.

The day is Wednesday, August 5, 1942, in the morning. The police close off the street. They surround the house. Horrible screams: "All Jews--out!" (in German); and then in Yiddish: "Quickly! Quickly!" The efficient organization for which the orphanage is well known can now be seen in operation. The children who, surprised in the middle of their breakfast, have their normal day's routine upset at a moment's notice, go down quietly and line up in fives...

Of all the deeds and creations of Januscz Korczak, the artist and reformer; of all (his assistant) Stefa Wilczenska's efforts; of all the games, smiles, and hopes of two hundred boys and girls--this one last walk will be remembered forever: because with one daring leap, it overcame murderous brutality. This small group under the leadership of Korczak has received eternal glory. It is a small group, the members of which are known by name, among the tens of thousands whose names fate caused to be forgotten...

He received no salary, and lived in a small, poorly furnished attic room, which he often shared with a child who had to get away from the others, or who needed quiet for a while. He even did some of the lowly tasks like washing dishes or scrubbing the floor.

The six full-length books he wrote for children have become favorites both in Poland and Israel. In each story, Korczak taught an important principle for good living. Many times he wrote about children who find themselves in positions of responsibility and the things they have to do for the benefit of others.

A children's weekly, which was a supplement to a well-known Polish-Jewish newspaper, and which supported the idea of Palestine becoming a Jewish State, may have had an influence in bringing him back to Judaism. Also many of his students at the orphanage "graduated" and went to Palestine. They corresponded with the doctor. He became interested in that land and traveled twice to Palestine. The second time he spent several weeks with his former students on a kibbutz. The spirit of self-sacrifice, the ideals, and the society built on trust that one person had for another--all this appealed to him.

When the Nazis began pressuring Jews, he became more closely identified with his people. In the fall of 1940, he was told that his orphanage was outside the limits of the ghetto set up by the Nazis. He was ordered to move the children. During the move a sack of potatoes Korczak had obtained with great effort was stolen by the German guards. He went directly to the office of the governor of Warsaw, complaining that those potatoes were for "his children." He was arrested and forced to spend four months in jail. After his release, although his non-Jewish friends begged him to leave the ghetto--and the country--he returned to the children.

On Wednesday morning, September 5, 1942, at the age of 64, Januscz Korczak led "his children" from the Jewish orphanage to the Umschlagplatz. Passerby could not believe their eyes. They saw a procession of singing children dressed in their "best" Sabbath clothes, led by a stately old man carrying a sick child.

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The scene was described in these works:

Today Korczak's orphanage was "evacuated"....Korczak refused to stay behind. He would not abandon "his" children. He went with them. And so, a long line formed in front of the orphanage....a long procession, children small, rather precocious, emaciated, weak, shriveled, and shrunk....no one is crying. Their eyes are turned toward the doctor. He is going with them, so what do they have to be afraid of? They are not alone, they are not abandoned....

Although he knew the truth, he told the children that they were going to sunshine and green fields. At the railroad station, one of the guards watched as the children were told to take off their yellow stars and pile them together. "It was like a field of buttercups," said the guard, sadly. From the railroad station, the children went to Treblinka and to death in the gas chambers.

Source: Stadtler, Bea. *The Holocaust: A History of Courage and Resistance.* Behrman House, Inc. N.J. 1973. pp. 81-86.

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STUDENT READING

----------The New York Times 3/8/45.

Oswiecim (Auschwitz) Killings Placed at 4,000,000

By C. L. Sulzberger

Moscow, May 7 - More than 4,000,000 persons were systematically slaughtered in a single German concentration camp - that at Oswiecim in Poland, near Cracow - from 1939 to 1944. The Germans thus accomplished with scientific efficiency the greatest incidence of mass murder in recorded history.

This slaughter exceeds in barbaric intention and method not only the greatest brutalities of such infamous conquerors as Genghis Khan but also surpasses even Germany's own record in her previous prize exhibitions at Maidanek, Dachau and Buchenwald.

Such is the miserable tale made public today - on the eve of the official end of the European war --by the Soviet Union's Extraordinary State Commission investigating the extermination center at Oswiecim. For some time various Russians have had a pretty good idea of the abysmal tale of Oswiecim, especially those now working on a Black Book of German infamy, but these are the first statistical data of the horrible camp's record.

According to the Soviet commission, "more than 4,000,000 citizens" of the Soviet Union, Poland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and other countries, including the non-Allied lands of Hungary and Rumania, were exterminated in Oswiecim [Auschwitz]. The means used were 'shooting, famine, poisoning and monstrous tortures.'"

The report states that gas chambers, crematoria, surgical wards, laboratories and clinics were erected around Oswiecim to accomplish this mass-production monstrosity.

Such a report would seem incredible to American readers, except that now they have been "conditioned" by the horrors of Buchenwald, which already have been fully investigated.

According to the Soviet report, which included interviews with 2,819 liberated prisoners at Oswiecim, German professors and doctors conducted their experiments on healthy persons, including castration, sterilization of women, artificial infection with cancer, typhus

and malaria germs, tests of the effects of poisons and the destruction of children by injection into the heart of carbolic acid or the simple method of heaving them into furnaces.

The camp, it is charged, was organized by Heinrich Himmler, built in 1939 by his order and constructed in a huge series of buildings around the Oswiecim suburbs to house between 180,000 and 250,000 prisoners simultaneously.

The first crematorium was erected in 1941, but the next year, it is stated, Himmler inspected the camp and decided that "improvements" were necessary, so new furnaces were built by the German firm of Topf & Sons.

Public baths were installed for group cyanide poisoning, and because "the baths" output exceeded the crematoria's capacity, deep pits were dug where excess bodies were burned over huge fires.

The report states that in 1943 the frugal Germans decided to sell the unburned bones to the firm of Schterhm to be used for the production of superphosphates, which was done, and that, in addition to almost 113 tons of crushed bones, loads of women's hair were sold for industrial purposes.

Within twenty-four hours, each crematorium was able to consume more than 10,000 bodies, it is stated on the basis of information provided by Polish, Hungarian, French, Czechoslovak, Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Italian, Greek, Rumanian and Belgian survivors interviewed.

Besides the human guinea pigs kept alive for experimentation, some 200,000 were utilized at various times for hard labor, but the weaklings were continually weeded out for the gas chambers.

Tons of clothing, bedding and the personal belongings of the murdered victims were sent to Germany.

Source: *The Record: The Holocaust in History, 1933-1945.* (Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in cooperation with the National Council for the Social Studies)

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STUDENT READING

A SURVIVOR REMEMBERS

Elie Wiesel, winner of The 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, was only fourteen years old when he was deported with his family to Auschwitz. Later he was transferred to Buchenwald. He wrote out some of his experiences in a delicate novella which he called *Night*.

...as the train stopped, we saw...flames...gushing out of a tall chimney into the black sky... We looked into the flames in the darkness. There was an abominable odor floating in the air. Suddenly, our doors opened. Some odd looking characters, dressed in striped shirts and black trousers leapt into the wagon. They held electric torches and truncheon. They began to strike out right and left shouting:

"Everybody get out. Everybody out of the wagon. Quickly." We jumped out...In front of us flames. In the air that smelled of burning flesh... We had arrived -- at Birkenau reception center for Auschwitz.

The cherished objects we had brought with us that far were left behind in the train and with them, at last, our illusions.

Every yard or so an SS man held his tommy gun trained on us. Hand-in-hand we followed the crowd..."Men to the left. Women to the right." Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight short simple words. Yet that was the moment I was parted from my mother... For a part of a second I glimpsed my mother and my sister moving to the right. Tzipora held mother's hand. I saw them disappear into the distance; my mother was stroking my sister's fair hair as though to protect her, while I walked on with my father and the other men. And I did not know that at that place, at that moment, I was parting from my mother and Tzipora forever. I went on walking. My father held my hand..." (pp. 70-71).

Source: Wiesel, Elie *Night*, New York, Bantam Books, 1960.

STUDENT READING

THE FATE OF THE HUNGARIAN JEWS

By the spring of 1944, the Nazis had already killed 5 million Jews in Europe. Until then, Hungary had been able to prevent the deportation of its more than 700,000 Jews to concentration camps. But in April, thousands of Jews began leaving the railyards of Budapest, the capital city, bound for Auschwitz.

By mid-1942, all the Allied governments were well aware of what was happening in the death camps. Members of the underground had helped to smuggle the information out of Europe. There was no longer any illusion about German aims.

In 1943, the Allied governments held discussions about what to do. A variety of ransom plans to "buy" Jews had been offered and none taken very seriously. At the summer Bermuda Conference attended by the Allied governments, the Jewish issue was reviewed without any final decisions. In frustration at the indecision of the conference, George Backer, active in working with refugees, said, "if 100,000 Germans would offer to surrender, we could find some way to get them out." Indeed, thousands of POW's had already been brought into the United States. An old rabbi commenting further on the inactivity of the Allied powers implored, "If 6,000,000 cattle had been slaughtered, there would have been more interest. A way would have been found. These are people...people."

Several months later, Samuel Zygelbojm, a member of the Jewish Labor Bund who was smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto to London, committed suicide in protest against the indifference of the Allied powers.

In this light, the Hungarian situation was charged with new tension for the Allies. A variety of emergency measures were proposed as ways of preventing the reality of certain death for the Hungarian Jews.

There was a plea that rail lines leading to Auschwitz be bombed. This, advocates argued, would effectively eliminate the transport routes essential to the death camp process. The American Fifteenth Air Force was stationed in Italy and was bombing synthetic oil works less then 5 miles from the gas chambers. The camps were also well in range of Russian dive bombers.

Both the U.S. War and State Departments were unwilling to take the bombing proposal seriously. Secretary of War John McCloy argued that such attempts would divert essential war material from the more important war effort and would needlessly risk American lives. Furthermore, such bombing would only result in worse conditions for Jews. The best way to save the Jews of Europe, McCloy argued, was to win the war quickly.

Another example of the extraordinary nature of the proposals to save Hungarian Jews was the 1944 Brand Mission. Joel Brand, a member of the Hungarian Zionist underground, was approached by Adolf Eichmann and offered a "deal." The German government would

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trade one million Hungarian Jews for 10,000 trucks. Eichmann promised that these trucks would be used only on the Eastern front against the Russians. Brand was told to meet with Jewish representatives in other nations who could help to convince the Allies to make the deal. Brand's mission was received with great doubt. Many wondered if the Nazis would really release any Jews and asked how the Allies could possibly offer trucks that would be used against them in the war. To some, the idea was a devious Nazi plan to drive a wedge between the Allies. To the British, the possible reality of taking in all those Jews seemed impossible. Perhaps the most extreme example of this view was offered by a British Foreign officer, "In my opinion, a disproportionate amount of time...is wasted in dealing with these wailing Jews."

Meanwhile, the Swedish government sent a young diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, to be Secretary of its Legation in Budapest. Wallenberg immediately began to establish ways of saving individual Jews. Over 15,000 Jews were soon provided with Swedish protective passports that prevented their deportation. Hundreds were provided with food. Others were taken off trains marked for the death camps and provided with passports. When the decision was made to eliminate the last 70,000 Jews of Budapest, Wallenberg told the German commander that he would hang when the Russians came. The German decision was halted. Wallenberg's efforts also encouraged similar actions to save Jews among the Swiss delegation and the International Red Cross. (Wallenberg himself was taken away by the Russians and "disappeared.")

On July 2, 1944, Budapest was bombed by Allied planes. Fearing further heavy raids, on July 7, Admiral Horthy, the leader of the fascist Arrow Cross, halted further deportation of Jews. Yet over 450,000 Hungarian Jews had been murdered in three months.

Questions for Discussion

1. Should the Allied countries have used their planes to bomb the rail lines leading to the death camps? What is your view of McCloy's argument?

2. During the war, the civilian German targets of Dresden and Hamburg were firebombed by the Allies to supposedly quicken an end to the war. Compare this decision with the choice not to bomb rail lines.

3. Should the Allied governments have taken seriously any ransom plan, including the Brand Mission, offered by the Germans?

4. Ironically another German ransom plan was negotiated with Saly Mayer, a representative of a Swiss Jewish agency. Jews were offered for the sum total of 3 million Swiss francs. In 1944, over 1,500 Orthodox Jews, many from Bergen-Belsen, were actually transported safely by the Germans to Basel, Switzerland. How do you explain this?

5. The Zygelbojm suicide has begun to receive more attention with further Holocaust study. What do you think Zygelbojm had come to believe about the world in which he lived?

6. A Roper poll taken in December 1944 revealed that the majority of Americans could not believe that millions of Jews had perished in the Nazi onslaught. One hundred thousand was considered a large figure for the number of Jews killed in Europe. What does this tell

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STUDENT READING

RAOUL WALLENBERG RESCUER

Raoul Wallenberg was the son of an important Swedish family. When he was a young man, he studied law in France, and architecture and engineering in the United States. He began a business career in Sweden and became an executive of a large import-export company in Stockholm, Sweden.

Before World War II, Wallenberg visited Palestine and came in contact with Jews and Jewish affairs. His business partner was an Hungarian Jew whose family was stranded in Nazi-occupied Hungary.

In the Spring of 1944, the Germans began deporting Hungarian Jews to extermination camps in Poland and some citizens in neutral Sweden began to organize efforts to rescue Hungarian Jews. The Jewish organizations in Stockholm were looking for a Swedish non-Jew who, with the help of the Swedish Embassy and money, provided by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, would go to Budapest, Hungary to organize the rescue operations.

It was a dangerous mission. Raoul Wallenberg was approached for the job and he accepted. He was appointed attaché of the Swedish Embassy which gave him diplomatic immunity in Budapest.

When he arrived in Budapest, he had a list of names of Hungarian anti-Nazis whose help he planned to solicit in a scheme to rescue Hungarian Jews. He established a new department in the Swedish Embassy in Budapest which was designated "Section C." The purpose of the "Section C" department was to rescue Hungarian Jews. Wallenberg issued several hundred Swedish passports to Hungarian Jews who had business ties or relatives in Sweden. He also created a "protective passport" which carried the Embassy seal and stamp and Wallenberg's signature. Over a thousand people were placed under Swedish protection.

Wallenberg was later arrested by the Soviets and disappeared in a Soviet prison.

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us about people and about how the Holocaust has altered our perspective about the "quality of death"?

7. In January, 1944, writer Arthur Koestler wrote, "A dog run over by a car upsets our emotional balance and digestion. Three million Jews killed in Poland causes but a moderate uneasiness....We are unable to embrace the total process with our awareness." Comment.

8. When do you think Americans knew about what was happening in the death camps? Do research on how much coverage of these events existed in newspapers and magazines (both non-church and church related) during the war. What might have hampered Americans from believing such reports?

Source: Furman, Harry (Ed.). *The Holocaust and Genocide: A Search for Conscience*. State of New Jersey, Department of Education. New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1983, pp. 174-175.